

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST.

(Staff and Equipment.)

RETURN to an Order of The Honourable the House of Commons,
dated 18th February, 1904;—for

COPY of (1) resolutions adopted by the Council of Queen's College, Belfast, on the 4th December, 1903, and by the Corporate Body on 9th December, 1903; (2) Irish Government letter of 17th December, 1903, in acknowledgment of same; (3) letter of 11th January, 1904, from the President of University College, Dublin; and (4) Irish Government letter of 15th January, 1904, in acknowledgment of same.

(Mr. Wyndham.)



*Ordered, by The House of Commons, to be printed,
18th February, 1904.*

DUBLIN :
PRINTED FOR HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE,
BY ALEXANDER THOM & CO. (LIMITED).

And to be purchased, either directly or through any Bookseller, from
E. PONSONBY, 116, Grafton-street, Dublin; or
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QUEEN'S COLLEGE,
BELFAST,
December, 1903.

To the Right Honourable the Chief Secretary.

SIR,

I am instructed by the President and Council of this College to forward you the enclosed resolutions.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. SYMINGTON,
Registrar.

RESOLUTIONS

ADOPTED UNANIMOUSLY BY THE COUNCIL OF THE QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST, ON THE 4TH DECEMBER, 1903, AND BY THE CORPORATE BODY ON 9TH DECEMBER, 1903.

Resolved—

I. That the attention of His Majesty's Government be called to the urgent necessity for largely increasing the equipment and staff of this College.

II. That, in illustration of the manner in which the College is hampered in its work by the want of a full and proper equipment, the notice of the Government be directed to the following typical cases:—

(a.) The Department of Natural Philosophy is at present crowded with students, for whom there is no proper laboratory. The Right Hon. W. J. Pirrie has promised to erect such a laboratory at his own cost, but without further equipment and staff the usefulness of this building when erected will be most seriously interfered with owing to the fact that the College does not possess the necessary funds for properly maintaining and working it.

(b.) The Natural History Department is unprovided with laboratories for practical work such as are to be found in similar colleges elsewhere, although it deals with three great subjects which cannot be taught or studied without practical work, viz.:—Zoology, Botany, and Geology, and although it is of essential importance to students in Arts, students in Medicine, and students in Engineering.

(c.) For the accommodation of the Department of Chemistry a new and much-needed building was commenced by the Government ten years ago, after repeated solicitations on our part, but the building remains uncompleted to this day, to the great inconvenience and disadvantage of professor and students, and to the serious detriment of the study of this most important subject.

It is to be noted that in the three cases to which we have thus referred, as in others which might be mentioned, not only is the College impeded in its work by the lack of an adequate equipment, but the interests of the

great commercial and manufacturing community in which it is placed, and which ought to be provided with the best available appliances for scientific instruction and investigation in such subjects, must inevitably suffer.

III. That in our opinion the College urgently requires, in order even to carry on its present work efficiently, not only in the Departments referred to, but throughout the entire Institution, enlarged facilities for teaching and research, an increase in the number of its Chairs, the provision of Assistants to the Professors, a much larger grant to the Library, and other additions which need not here be more particularly detailed inasmuch as they were fully stated in evidence before the recent Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland. It is to be noted that a large increase in the staff, equipment, and endowment of the College was unanimously, and in most appreciative terms, recommended by the Commission.

IV. That we further call the earnest attention of His Majesty's Government to the fact that a scheme for the foundation in the College of a Faculty of Commerce, with adequate courses of study, which has been devised through the joint action of the Belfast Chamber of Commerce and the College, and in support of which several munificent donations have been offered, remains inoperative because we have not the necessary funds to carry it out.

V. To another important matter we also call attention:—A committee composed of representatives of the Belfast Town Council, the Chamber of Commerce, and the College, this year unanimously agreed upon a scheme for providing Belfast with a system of Higher Technical Education by means of a correlation between the College and the local Municipal Technical Institute. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction has expressed the view that a separate system of higher education is necessary for Belfast, and has also approved of the above method of accomplishing this desirable end. But little progress has been made with the project, although Dublin and the South of Ireland are being provided, by means of the development of the Royal College of Science and in other ways, with a complete system of Higher Technical Instruction at a large cost to the State.

VI. At the beginning of a new Collegiate Session, when the evils of which we complain are once more pressed upon our attention with augmented force, owing to the fact that in more than one Department of the College the attendance of students is larger than it has been for many years, we believe that we should fail in our duty if we did not call the earnest attention of His Majesty's Government to matters like these, which are all the more serious because they affect not the College only, but the interests of the higher education of the whole of the North of Ireland. We, therefore, urgently implore the Government to take these evils into their immediate consideration, and at the earliest moment to adopt such measures as may effectually remedy a state of affairs which places young Ulster men at a serious disadvantage in regard to their education, and cannot but be detrimental, in many ways, to the best interests of Belfast and the whole of the North of Ireland.

VII. We beg to point out that this College has manifold claims of its own on the attention of the Government. The Government in founding the College supplanted the Institution for higher education, which the city of Belfast had provided for itself many years before, and which was in full and vigorous operation. In so doing, it gave the locality no voice in the management of the new College, but in the "Colleges Act" assumed full responsibility for its maintenance, administration, and expansion.

The history of the College proves that in supplying higher education in the Province of Ulster, according to the method laid down in its Charter, it has very successfully carried out the intentions of the Government.

When in recent years the expansion of the teaching required in various departments had compelled the College to ask the Government to provide increased means for carrying on its work, we were given to understand that

the application would be favourably considered if, by local contributions, the people of Belfast should show their interest in the College. Such local contributions can now be reported to a very large amount. Our President was last year able to inform the Royal Commission on University Education in Ireland that up to that time nearly £60,000 had been contributed by the locality for the erection of buildings, the foundation of Chairs, the establishment of studentships, scholarships, &c. Through the operations of the College "Better Equipment Fund" alone, of whose Committee the Lord Mayor of Belfast is Chairman, most valuable additions have been made to our property and equipment. During the two years which have elapsed since the establishment of this fund its receipts have been about £10,000, and it is expected in the near future to be the means of conveying to the College even larger benefactions than we have yet received. Altogether, the public have bestowed upon the College not much less than £100,000. The College, and the subscribers to this fund, hold that that local support has now been assured, the evidence of which was regarded by the Treasury as a necessary preliminary to a provision for the required expansion of our equipments and staff.

These circumstances being so, the only argument for the continual postponement of any measure providing for the requisite equipment of the College must be based on the difficulty of finding a practicable scheme for settling the general University question. To insist, however, that this difficulty should be permitted to stand in the way of the development of higher education here would be most unfair to the community in which the College has been so successful, unjust to those who have acted in response to the Treasury's request for evidence of local support, and would introduce conditions which have not been in any way created by the College and over which it has no control.

J. SYMINGTON,
Registrar.

Queen's College, Belfast,
10th December, 1903.

DUBLIN CASTLE,
17th December, 1903.

SIR,

I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 14th instant enclosing copies of resolutions adopted by the Council of the Queen's College, Belfast, on the 4th instant and by the Corporate Body on the 9th instant, and to say that they will receive the careful attention demanded by the importance of the subject to which they refer.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,
J. B. DOUGHERTY.

The Registrar,
Queen's College, Belfast.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:

I have seen in a Belfast newspaper a copy of a Memorial recently addressed to Your Excellency by the Governing Body of Queen's College, Belfast, on which I feel it my duty, as President of this College, to submit respectfully for Your Excellency's consideration the following observations:—

1. I may say at once that (prescinding from other aspects of the question and speaking solely from the educational point of view) with the substance and main purpose of the Memorial I am personally in cordial agreement. As a Senator of the Royal University for nearly twenty years, and engaged as I have been for twice that time in education, I am well acquainted with the extent and the quality of the educational work of Queen's College, Belfast, and I entirely concur in the favourable judgment of that work expressed by the recent University Commission, and in their recommendation that in any new University scheme "a liberal addition should be made to the general endowment of the College." I believe that it would conduce very largely indeed, not only to the benefit of Belfast and of the Northern province, but to the industrial improvement of the whole country, that there should exist in Belfast a great University College adequately endowed and thoroughly equipped to meet the requirements of modern scientific and industrial development, and I agree with the authorities of Queen's College that the present endowment and equipment fall very short of these requirements; and that it is therefore a matter of pressing urgency that adequate provision should be made for that purpose.

But whilst I so far concur most cordially in the substance of the Memorial, when it is further suggested that the claims of Belfast Queen's College should be at once separately dealt with on their own merits, and should not be held over for consideration as part of a scheme for re-organising Irish University Education, I feel it my duty, as President of University College, to enter a respectful protest against the adoption of such a course of action.

And I do so on the plain and simple issue of educational fair play and of the equitable and economic distribution of public educational funds; setting aside for the moment all the other considerations of public policy that are involved in the University question, or that relate to the manner of its solution.

I submit that if a record of good work done under some disadvantages, and the demand of a great community to have the institution doing that work made adequate to their wants and suitable to the educational necessities of the times—if these conditions constitute a just claim for urgency in dealing with Belfast Queen's College; I submit that the record of work done in University College under much graver disadvantages, and the demand of the far larger community which it represents, to have provided for them an educational institution adequate to *their* wants and suitable to present educational requirements constitute a much more forcible and equitable claim for urgency in dealing with the whole Irish University question.

Here are the facts and figures on which I rest that argument, and to which I respectfully ask attention.

I assume—as an admitted principle of equitable, economic administration of public educational funds—that the endowments granted to public teaching institutions should bear some reasonable proportion to the quantity and quality of the educational work which they accomplish; that institutions which have proved their success should be fostered and developed, and that where institutions after years of trial have proved a failure, the public funds should no longer be wasted on them.

Bearing this principle in mind, I proceed to apply it to the present distribution of public funds on higher education in Ireland. Apart from Trinity College, with its income of £38,000 a year, there are four Colleges for higher education endowed from public funds—the three Queen's Colleges and University College, Dublin. The Queen's Colleges receive a yearly grant of £21,000 from the Consolidated Fund, and additional grants

under various heads in the yearly estimates. The estimates for the past three years 1901-2-3 show that the total expenditure on the three Colleges in these years amounted respectively to £34,098, £34,916, £34,966; and this last sum, £34,966, is also the estimate for the current year 1903-4. If we add to these sums the charge involved in the original outlay of £100,000 on buildings and equipment, equivalent to £3,000 a year, we find that the total expense to the taxpayers of the United Kingdom amounts roughly to £38,000 a year, or over £12,600 for each College. Along with the Faculty of Arts—which is the main element of higher culture in a University—each of these Colleges has Faculties of Medicine, Engineering, and Law; but a comparatively small portion of the funds is expended on these Faculties. If we allow £2,600 for that purpose in each College, a liberal allowance, we find that the Arts Faculty in each of these Colleges is maintained at an expense of £10,000 a year; of that sum more than £1,000 a year in each College is allocated to providing scholarships, exhibitions, and prizes in the Faculty of Arts open exclusively to the students of the College, who, notwithstanding, have been and are at present permitted to compete also for (and if successful to hold conjointly) the scholarships, exhibitions, and prizes of the Royal University against students from Colleges which have no such provisions made for them.

University College, on the contrary, receives no endowment from the State. The Senate of the Royal University, out of its income of £20,000 a year derived from the Irish Church Fund, established in 1882 twenty-eight Fellowships with a maximum salary of £400 a year. The primary duty of these Fellows is to act as examiners in the Royal University itself—but they are also required to give their services in teaching in a College appointed by the Senate. Of these Fellowships nine were allocated to University College, some years later the number was increased to fourteen, and on the establishment of a Fellowship in Celtic, to fifteen.

Allowing £100 a year each for the work which these Fellows do as Examiners in the Royal University, the remaining £300 represents the salary given to them for their teaching work in the University College, which becomes thus indirectly endowed to the extent of £4,500 a year. Beyond that sum the College has no endowment of any kind; no provision for buildings or equipment; for rent, taxes, or maintenance; for salaries for the President, and other executive officers; for scholarships, exhibitions, and prizes.

The four Colleges, thus unequally aided from the public funds, adapt their courses of studies to the programmes of the Royal University; the Presidents of the Colleges have a place on the Senate; the main body of the Examiners of the University are Professors in the Colleges; a Professor of University College and a Professor from a Queen's College (aided in the Higher Examinations by extern Specialists) prepare conjointly the examination papers, and mark the results, and they sit conjointly at the oral examinations; and the students of the four Colleges (along with many others from Colleges which receive no State aid at all) compete annually at the University Examinations.

The results of these examinations are published in the newspapers and in the University Calendars; and these results give a fair measure of the quality and quantity of the work done in the several Colleges in the various branches of higher education.

The Registrar of University College has prepared from the Yearly Calendars a comparative analysis of the results obtained by students of the four Colleges in the Arts Examinations of the past ten years from 1894 to 1903 inclusive, and has furnished me with the following tables:—

1st. The total number of prizes, honours, and distinctions gained respectively by the students of the four endowed Colleges in that period;

2nd. The number of first-class honours, prizes, and distinctions gained in the same period; and, 3rd, the numbers of first-class classical honours and of first-class exhibitions (£42) at the B.A. Honours Examinations, and of studentships (£300) at the M.A. Examinations, obtained in the same ten years in all the branches of secular learning.

1st. Total number of distinctions on the whole course:—

Yearly Endowment for Arts Faculties.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	Total.
£4,500 University College, .	87	81	87	82	77	55	57	63	65	50	704
£10,000 Queen's College, Belfast, .	72	79	74	63	65	70	67	58	40	44	632
£10,000 Queen's College, Galway, .	48	25	14	25	14	18	32	26	23	24	249
£10,000 Queen's College, Cork, .	13	15	5	7	3	2	5	—	5	6	80

2nd. First-class distinctions only:—

Yearly Endowment for Arts Faculties.	1894.	1895.	1896.	1897.	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.	1902.	1903.	Total.
£4,500 University College, .	45	37	47	49	40	32	33	31	26	34	374
(Queen's College, Belfast, .	29	34	18	30	28	27	28	25	19	14	348
£30,000 Queen's College, Galway, .	8	8	2	11	5	10	9	17	11	5	
Queen's College, Cork, .	6	4	2	2	1	—	—	—	2	3	

3rd. Table showing that from 1894 to 1903 in the highest examinations, and in all the branches of secular learning, University College competed successfully against the three Queen's Colleges together.

In the year 1897 no First Class Honours in classics were awarded at the B.A. Honours Examination. In the other nine years, 1894-1903, twenty-two First Class Honours in all were awarded in classics, and with these comparative results:—

	1st Place.	2nd Place.	3rd Place.	4th Place.	Total.
University College,	7	6	2	0	15
Queen's College, Belfast,	2	2	0	1	5
Queen's College, Galway,	0	1	0	0	1
Queen's College, Cork,	0	0	1	0	1

Of the £42 B.A. prizes in the same period, University College won 30; the three Queen's Colleges, 29 (Belfast 22, Galway 6, Cork 1).

Of the studentships (£300) in the same period, University College won 14; the three Queen's Colleges 13 (Belfast 10, Galway 1, Cork 2); and these studentships were awarded in the following subjects:—

	Classics.	Medieval Scriptures.	Mathematics.	History and Political Science.	Experimental Science.	Modern Literature.	Total.
University College,	3	4	3	2	1	1	14
Queen's College, Belfast,	1	2	4	1	2	—	13
Queen's College, Galway,	—	—	—	—	—	1	
Queen's College, Cork,	—	—	1	—	—	1	

I may add that the only two studentships in Biological Science ever awarded by the University, the only two gold medals ever awarded for Latin Verse, and four of the six gold medals for English Prose Composition, were won by students of University College.

In face of these figures, I fail to see how the request of Belfast Queen's College for priority of treatment can be maintained.

In face of these facts and figures, I may ask, too, "What becomes of the charges so flippantly made of 'limitations of thought' of 'clerical obscurantism' with regard to scientific teaching? of the 'danger of low standards in a Catholic College or University'?"

In addition to such charges, the phrases, "Sectarian exclusiveness," "clerical domination," "monastic training," and the like, are made to play an important part in discussions on the Irish University question. I, therefore, venture to add a few words on the position and character of University College compared, for instance, with Queen's College, Belfast.

1. Like the Catholic University which preceded it, University College is open to students of all denominations; and has now, and has had for the past twenty years, a much larger percentage of non-Catholic students attending its classes than Belfast Queen's College has ever had of Catholics.

I may note in this connection that it is frequently alleged that the grant made by the Irish Parliament for the establishment of the College of Maynooth was given for the common education of laymen and of clerics, and that the Bishops excluded not only the Protestants, but the Catholic laity from the College. As far back as April 18th, 1845, this charge had been disposed of by Sir Robert Peel in the House of Commons in a debate on the Maynooth Grant.

"We are told," he said, "that this institution of Maynooth is of a monastic and ascetic character. Whose fault is that? Not of the Roman Catholics. In 1795, at the institution of the College, Mr. Grattan presented a petition from the Roman Catholic Body against that clause which prohibited the education of Protestants at Maynooth.

"The trustees of Maynooth College were desirous of establishing a lay College. They did not wish it to be of an exclusive character. They, however, were interfered with and prevented, and Mr. Abbott informed the Secretary that the creation of a lay College would be contrary to the intentions of the Act; and in consequence of the intervention of the British Government it was prevented." (Hansard, Vol. 79, p. 1032, April 18th, 1845.)

2. The Professorial Staff of University College numbers twenty-one members—fifteen professors and six tutors. Of the fifteen professors, eight had won studentships in the Royal University; another a gold medal for excellence; another a special prize of £100; three of them are graduates of Oxford (two of whom won the highest distinctions also in the Royal University); one is a research graduate of Cambridge, and also a most distinguished graduate of the Royal University; and another was a distinguished scholar and graduate of both the Dublin University and the Royal University.

On that Professorial Staff there have always been one or more Protestant Professors.

On the Council of six members, which governs the College conjointly with the President (a Council elected by the whole body of Professors), five are laymen, and one of the five is a Protestant.

On the other hand, in Belfast Queen's College there is not now, and there never has been, a single Roman Catholic Professor in the Faculty of Arts. Nay more, in 1845, when the Queen's Colleges Bill was before the House of Commons, Sir R. Peel read a letter which he had received from a gentleman in the North of Ireland to this effect:—

"Sir J. Graham appears to have intimated that all religions would be represented in the Professorships. Now I should be acting most unfaithfully to the Government did I not clearly express my conviction that one Roman Catholic or Unitarian Professor in the Undergraduate course would at once decide the General Assembly to withdraw every student; of this result I entertain not a single doubt. You might indeed appoint an Episcopalian, not known as a Puseyite, as readily as a Presbyterian or a Baptist, Independent or Methodist without much dissatisfaction, but not a Unitarian or Roman Catholic Professor." (Hansard Vol. 81, p. 1087).

Where, I would ask, has any such menace been given on the part of Roman Catholics? The Government took the warning, they had conferences with the delegates of the General Assembly, and when the Professors and Deans of Residences were appointed in 1849 the General Assembly passed the following resolution, which is worth careful consideration:—

"Whereas Her Majesty's Government have enabled Us to provide for the religious instruction of all our students by the endowment of a Theological Faculty under our own exclusive jurisdiction; and whereas the qualifications and character of the persons appointed in the Queen's College, Belfast, for those classes which the students of this church have hitherto been required to attend are such as to justify this Assembly in accepting certificates and degrees from that College, We now permit them to attend the classes of that Department in the Queen's College." (Queen's College Commission, 1857, p. 52).

On the other hand, when the Professors were appointed at the same time in the Colleges of Cork and Galway—Colleges professedly established to satisfy the demand of Roman Catholics for higher education, and in the midst of communities almost entirely Catholic—"out of twenty professors in the Galway College there were only two Roman Catholics in the Faculty of Arts—the Professors of Mathematics and of History and English Literature; "in the College of Cork, out of twenty professors, three were Roman Catholics, but two of these were Professors in Medicine and the other in Law." (Evidence of Dr. Starkie before the Royal Commission, second report, p. 189.) There was not a single Roman Catholic Professor in the Faculty of Arts.

If the heads of the Roman Catholic Church discountenanced the attendance of Catholic students at Colleges so constituted, does the charge of illiberality and sectarianism lie well, I wonder, in the mouths of those on whose behalf the foregoing warning had been given to the Government, and to whom there had been meted out by that Government such very different treatment?

If in Birmingham there were established a single endowed College of higher education—said to be entirely undenominational, and open to all religions on equal terms, but of which all the Arts Professors were Roman Catholics—would the leaders of Nonconformism think themselves open to charges of "illiberality" or "sectarianism" if they held aloof from such a College, or if they denounced it as constituted most unsuitably to its surroundings and most unfairly to the Nonconformist and Anglican denominations?

Or is it too much to ask that the religious convictions of the Roman Catholics, who form the vast majority of the people of Ireland, should receive at length some small measure of the consideration that has been given so abundantly and for so long a time to Irish Protestants and Irish Presbyterians?

So much for the Professorial Staff.

3. Of the students of University College, over 90 per cent. are preparing for purely secular pursuits; in Belfast Queen's College a large proportion of the Arts Graduates are preparing to enter the ministry of the Presbyterian Church.

4. As regards the financial administration of University College, the Registrar and Bursar—who is a layman—receives all the fees; submits his accounts to the Council fortnightly; and under their direction makes all disbursements; the accounts are audited by a public auditor; and the auditor's report is submitted to the body of Professors and Tutors. If any surplus existed after necessary expenditure, it would be divided *pro rata* amongst the Professors; unfortunately so far there has been only a deficit, for which I, as President, though receiving no salary, have made myself responsible.

My Jesuit colleagues, who receive £400 a year each for their work as Fellows of the Royal University, devote that sum (which has varied with their number from £800 to £2,400 in all) to the maintenance of the College, and this has enabled me to keep it going and to achieve such measure of success as it has obtained.

I have made bold to submit to Your Excellency's consideration these details of the spirit and management of a Catholic University College which, though administered by a Jesuit President, is the property of the Catholic Bishops, who might at any time have resumed possession of it, and yet who never once interfered in its administration; and I have done so because I think that if they were more generally known they would help to correct the erroneous notions that many people seem to entertain of what the spirit and management is likely to be of such a College as is claimed for Catholics; that is, a College as satisfactory to Catholics in every respect—of equipment, endowment, and autonomy—as Trinity College is to Protestants; a College open to all, but administered—not as University College has been, by any section of Catholics—but by an academical body truly representing and enjoying the confidence of the whole Catholic community—Bishops, clergy, and laity alike.

I repeat again: In face of these facts and figures, I fail to see how the request of Belfast Queen's College for priority of treatment can be maintained.

They seem to me to prove also conclusively:—

1st. That the expenditure of £23,000 a year on the Colleges of Cork and Galway in their present condition is absolutely indefensible on any principle of just and economic administration of public funds.

2nd. That, seeing the work done by University College under ~~or~~ ⁱⁿ circumstances of every kind, it is evident that if there were such a College for Catholics, with suitable buildings, equipment, endowment, we might fairly expect still more satisfactory results in far greater quantity.

3rd. That, as things are, the present distribution of for higher education is both economically and educationally and unjust. And therefore—

4th. That even from the limited point of view here presented, it is a matter of urgency that the question of higher education in Ireland should be at once dealt with by the Government.

I have the honour to be, My Lord,

Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

WILLIAM

University College,
Dublin, January 11th, 1904.

P.S.—To prevent any possible misconception of the drift I think it right to repeat what I have already said in my evidence to the Royal Commission, when asked by Professor Lorrain Smith:

"In view of any permanent arrangement that may be made, do you think of the College, as it exists at present, under the management of the Fathers?"

FATHER DELANY replied:—

"Certainly not. Such an arrangement would be entirely inadmissible no endowment, however generous, could make of the institution in St. John's a suitable University College, still less, a suitable independent University for the necessary buildings and grounds. In the next place, even if there were no other difficulty in the way, I consider that in the contemplated I should be a room for all the best intellects of the country; that it should be governed from within, not by any mere section of the laity but by a body thoroughly representative of the whole Catholic people and therefore enjoying the confidence of all."

DUBLIN CASTLE,

15th January, 1904.

SIR,

I am directed by the Lord Lieutenant to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, setting forth the position of University College, Dublin, in connection with the question of University education in Ireland, and to state that the letter will receive careful attention.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A. P. MACDONNELL.

The Rev. W. Delany, S.J., LL.D.,
President of University College, Dublin.